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picture of animal life in the forests of equatorial Africa. The book is divided into short chapters, each devoted to a pair, or a community of animals, from the huge pachyderms to the smallest insects. The animals are made to discourse very naïvely to each other on the hardships and joys of their life, and to describe the special adaptations that fit them for it. There is no attempt at a connected story, or at any incidents which would not naturally result from the simple motives which influence the actions of animals, their care for their young, and their desire for food. The book is the story of the vicissitudes of wild life, the periods of plenty alternating with those of want, — a life where only activity or ingenuity or patience can hope to maintain itself. This is a refreshingly wholesome point of view in this age, when our views of animals are too much tinged by imaginative sentiment. The constant repetition of much the same story, however, makes the three hundred and odd pages rather difficult reading, especially as they are never lightened by a ray of humor. Native names for the animals are early introduced and then used exclusively, so that the memory must bear a constantly increasing burden. When the “nkengos” say that they are glad that they have found no traces of “nginas, nshiegos, mbouvés, and koolookambas,” we gain, despite the glossary, but a confused idea of the cause of their joy. The book will hardly arouse an interest in animals in children who do not already possess it, but on the other hand it will teach them nothing that is not true, unless it be an exaggerated idea of the range of an animal’s thought. The book cannot fail to win a valuable place in a school or juvenile library, and will teach those who have an interest in animals many details of the life history of African animals in particular, and a very just conception of wild life as a whole. The illustrations are all good and some are excellent.

R. H.

**Mooswa and Others of the Boundaries.**<sup>1</sup> — The author of *Mooswa and Others of the Boundaries* says in his introduction: “Perhaps this story is too simple, too light, too prolific of natural history, too something or other — I don’t know; I have but tried to tell the things that appeared very fascinating to me under the giant spruce and the white-barked poplars, with the dark-faced Indians and the open-handed white trappers sitting about a spirit-soothing camp-fire.” The suspicion here intimated that he has perhaps not succeeded in

<sup>1</sup> Fraser, W. A. *Mooswa and Others of the Boundaries*. Illustrated by Arthur Heming. New York, Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1900. 260 pp.

imparting the fascination to his readers seems to us justified. The story is certainly "light," but whether it is "too prolific of natural history" may be questioned.

The scene of the story is laid in the forests of the Athabasca, in which a lad of fourteen spends the winter in the charge of a half-breed trapper. The interest of the story lies in the successful efforts of the animals of the region to save their skins from the trapper, and later in the endeavors of Mooswa, a moose whom the boy once befriended, to save the boy from starvation.

If the book is an attempt to convey, in the form of a story, knowledge of the ways of animals, it is a failure, for whatever truth it may contain is obscured by a bewildering amount of romance. Thus when the fox is caught in a trap, the beaver gnaws off his foot, and the Canada Jay sews the skin over the stump with his beak. If the author has tried to make a good tale, after the pattern of the *Jungle Books*, he has failed through lack of the requisite literary skill. The story is presumably intended for boys, but even boys, if fed on Kipling and Seton-Thompson, would tire of the idle chatter which is put into the mouths of the principal interlocutors. The book is by no means bad; there are humorous situations, and even moments of interest, approaching excitement. A decade ago it might have proved acceptable, but the standard of excellence in such matters has been set too high, by the creators of *Mowgli* and *Wab*, for any but skillful artists to hope for success in the field. The illustrations are far superior to the text.

R. H.

**Miller's Key to the Land Mammals of Eastern North America.**<sup>1</sup>—

Probably no recent contribution to the literature of North American mammalogy will be so gratefully and widely welcomed as Mr. Miller's brief synopsis of the land mammals of eastern North America. So great has been the increase in our knowledge of the subject during the last fifteen years, so radical the changes in nomenclature, so different the present methods of investigation, and so scattered the literature that has been the outcome of this renaissance, that only the few specialists engaged in the work could hope to keep in touch with the subject. The general student hence found himself hopelessly lost in intricate labyrinths in any attempt he might make to gain a clear conception of the results thus far reached, in even a limited

<sup>1</sup> Miller, Gerrit S. *Key to the Land Mammals of Eastern North America*, *Bulletin of the New York State Museum*, vol. viii (October, 1900), No. 38, pp. 59-160.